

REMARKS

Claims 1-11 are canceled and Claims 12-18 have been added. Support for the new claims may be found in the Specification as filed at least in FIGS. 5 through 7 and the related descriptions. No new matter has been added. The rejections of the claims are respectfully traversed in light of the amendments and following remarks, and reconsideration is requested.

Applicants direct the Examiner to advantageous features of the present invention, which is directed to a vehicle occupant restraint system that raises a front part of a seat bottom upon prediction and/or detection of a vehicle crash. In particular, the present invention is provided with a crash sensor and a crash prediction sensor. When a vehicle crash is predicted by the crash prediction sensor, the seat bottom is only partly deployed. If the prediction turns out to be wrong, the seat bottom is retracted in a reversible manner. On the other hand, if an actual crash is detected by the crash sensor, the seat bottom is fully deployed in an irreversible manner. Thereby, the restraint system is allowed to make a head start when a crash is predicted, and is given ample time to reach a fully deployed position before the vehicle occupant starts to be thrown forward on account of inertia and the rapid deceleration of the vehicle which is caused by the vehicle crash.

Applicants submit that the cited references do not disclose or suggest all the limitations of Claim 12, and thus Claim 12 is patentable over the cited references.

Claims 13-18 are dependent on Claim 12 and contain additional limitations that further distinguish them from the cited references. Therefore, Claims 13-18 are allowable over the cited references for at least the same reasons provided above with respect to Claim 12.

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CONCLUSION

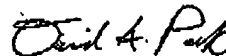
For the above reasons, Applicants believe pending Claims 12-18 are now in condition for allowance and allowance of the Application is hereby solicited. If the Examiner has any questions or concerns, the Examiner is hereby requested to telephone Applicants' Attorney at (949) 752-7040.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being sent by facsimile to 571-273-8300 on the date shown below.


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October 12, 2005

Respectfully submitted,



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